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ABSTRACT

This document offers recommendations on implementation of Portland (Oregon) Public Schools Talented and Gifted (TAG) educational program in the areas of identification, instructional planning, assessment, communication, early entry, isolated gifted students, social/emotional needs, and budget. The evaluation report identifies each recommendation as to whether a concept or practice is new and should be introduced, existing and should be further developed, or existing and should be maintained with continuing effect and refinement. In the areas of identification, recommendations are offered regarding the overall goal, nomination, and the identification process. In the area of instructional planning, recommendations focus on the application of assessment results to instruction. For communication, the establishment of excellent communication among teachers, parents, students, principals, and administrators is the goal. In the area of early entry, recommendations concern the maintenance of the early entry option. For isolated gifted students (either due to geography or their exceptionality) emphasis is on establishing a mechanism for providing these students with appropriate educational services. To support students' social/emotional needs, the report offers a number of specific recommendations to give these needs more prominence in the TAG program. Finally, recommendations regarding the budget urge compliance with the state mandate and accountability. (DB)

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TALENTED AND GIFTED EDUCATION**Portland Public Schools****Framework for Meeting the Needs of TAG Students****CONTENTS**

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Developed by a PPS Board-appointed committee composed of teachers, parents, administrators, board members and TAG staff. Endorsed by the PPS Board June 1996

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INTRODUCTION

Portland Public Schools Board appointed a TAG Subcommittee to look at the current TAG program with the mission to evaluate TAG and make recommendations for change. This document reports the level of implementation of TAG in the areas of Instructional Planning, Assessment, Communication, Early Entry, Isolated Gifted Students, Social/Emotional Needs, and Budget. Implementation is a three to five year process. The committee identified three general levels of implementation for judging progress. First stage of implementation is INTRODUCE (I) which is initiating the new concept; second, is DEVELOP (D) which is the budding and blooming level; and finally, the MAINTAIN (M) level is the status quo in which there is reflection and refinement.

KEY:

- (I) **Introduce:** New concepts
- (D) **Develop:** Continue to implement
- (M) **Maintain:** Status Quo; reflect and refine

IDENTIFICATION

- D **GOAL :** To identify all TAG students, to assess the appropriate level of instructional services for these children, and to maintain on-going assessment data facilitating a continuous delivery of appropriate services throughout their school career.

NOMINATION :

- M 1) written notification by schools of parents' right to nominate their child for TAG services.
- M 2) responsibility of teaching staff to nominate potential TAG students, with subsequent parental consent.

IDENTIFICATION :

- M 1) written parental notification by schools prior to testing. The testing is to be completed in a timely manner, generally within 30-60 days. The exact test to be decided between the tester and the TAG coordinator at the school.
- D
 - K - 12 : identification of TAG children utilizing the Frasier TABs (Traits, Attributes and Behaviors) model combined with work samples, intellectual and/or academic tests, observation data, and environmental-cultural factors.
- I
 - transfer students: establishment of a process for identifying potential TAG students within one month of transfer into PPS. Upon entrance, schools should inquire about any special programs a student has been previously enrolled, e.g. ESL, Special Education, TAG.
- D 2) the school Leadership Team meeting on an on-going basis to determine identification. The Team shall notify parents and teachers within 10 days of decision.
- M 3) identification of parental right to request additional testing and to appeal decision denying TAG status.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

- D GOAL : To ensure that assessment results in appropriate instruction which meets students' rate and level needs. Assessments are made before determining appropriate programs and services. Programs and services are modified based on assessments throughout the year.

Assessments may include:

- observations
- anecdotal records
- work samples
- scoring guides
- portfolios
- teacher-developed tests
- standardized tests
- review of academic history
- child's response to instruction to determine rate

- D 1) appropriate rate and level services should be provided to all TAG identified students from September through June. Formalization of the instructional program should be in the form of an instructional plan created between parent, student, and teacher prior to November 1 or within 30 days for newly identified students.

- D 2) instructional planning that links services to the pre and post assessment information and is designed to provide each student with the appropriate rate and level of instruction.

- D 3) instructional planning that describes materials, curricula, and services.

- D 4) Instructional Plans that specify how the work will be differentiated to meet students' level and rate:

- I • flexible ability grouping to achieve level and rate instructional needs.

- I • curriculum compacting.

- D • substitution of advanced work for curriculum already mastered.

- I • district-wide benchmark standards for various subjects to place students at the appropriate level and to evaluate the rate of a student's progress.

- D • teacher facilitation for independent or self-directed work.

- M • programs which facilitate group acceleration; such as honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and college coursework.

- I 5) instructional planning that specifies the criteria for evaluation of student products and achievements at the regular reporting periods.
- D 6) modification of instructional planning if evaluation, or student progress, shows that it is necessary.
- D 7) Instructional Plans and evaluations that can be used by teachers in subsequent years for providing smooth articulation and avoiding repetition of work already completed or curriculum already mastered.

GOAL: COMMUNICATION: District Region and Building

- D GOAL : To make optimum learning experiences possible by establishing excellent communication between and among teachers, parents, students, principals, and administrators.
- M 1) determining compliance with the state TAG mandate and satisfaction with provided services.
- M 2) communicating with teachers, parents, and students about various programs and services.
- M 3) promoting regular parent involvement including
 - D • production and distribution of a revised District handbook for TAG parents.
 - M • information to all TAG children and their parents about available programs.
 - D • building meetings concerning TAG topics.
 - D • establishment of a building TAG committee.
 - M • TAG parent representation on all regional and district committees involved in TAG planning.
 - M • provision of timely information to parents about DTAC meetings.
- M 4) implementing District TAG guidelines for uniformity of services
 - M • communication of these guidelines to all principals and teachers.
 - D • follow-through by principals to ascertain if services are being delivered in an appropriate and timely fashion.
 - D • follow-through from the region or district to ascertain if services are being delivered in an appropriate and timely fashion.
- M 5) reviewing building TAG plans and programs at the Region level.

6) a clear and concise appeals and complaint process following the Students Rights and Responsibilities procedure, including

- D
 - communication by school principals to TAG coordinators, teachers, and parents regarding the chain of responsibility for TAG implementation and the appeals process.
- D
 - timely and accurate recording of all complaints, appeals, and their resolutions.

EARLY ENTRY

M GOAL : To maintain the option of early entry for gifted children.

- M
 - 1) retaining the existing screening and counseling process before initiating testing.
- M
 - 2) reducing or waiving of evaluation fees for families whose children qualify for free or reduced lunch.
- M
 - 3) retaining the existing district testing of potential early entry candidates.
- M
 - 4) counseling families after testing regarding the advantages and disadvantages of early entry.
- M
 - 5) maintaining an appeal process which flows from the principal to the region to the district.
- D
 - 6) more flexible grouping and mixed age classrooms within grades K through 3.

ISOLATED GIFTED: Exceptional and/or Geographic

D GOAL : To establish a mechanism for providing appropriate rate and level education for gifted children who are or exceptional or geographically-isolated.

- D
 - 1) recognizing that 'exceptionally' gifted children have abilities so advanced that their instructional needs and rate and level of learning are distinct from those of other TAG identified children.
- I
 - 2) providing consultation for isolated gifted students to address academic and social-emotional issues.
- D
 - 3) informing parents of District or regional grouping of TAG children by administrative transfer to provide more appropriate rate and level services.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL NEEDS

- D GOAL : To support TAG policies which recognize the TAG child's social and emotional needs.
- I 1) educating principals, TAG coordinators, child development specialists, teachers, and parents about the social/emotional needs of TAG children, e.g., the warning signs of disengagement or social isolation.
- I 2) recognizing that academic frustration may lead to inappropriate behavior, withdrawal, or depression.
- D 3) maintaining reasonable work expectations for TAG children.
- D 4) recognizing the diversity of TAG children with respect to race, ethnicity, gender, maturity, creativity, physical ability, coping skills, learning style, etc.
- D 5) recognizing that TAG children are not necessarily more capable of taking charge of their own learning and behavior than other children of the same age.
- D 6) recognizing that mastery of a subject does not necessarily prepare a child to teach peers.
- D 7) encouraging TAG children to pursue their academic or creative passions.
- D 8) allowing TAG children to be with intellectual peers through flexible grouping patterns.
- D 9) counseling for children whose giftedness creates social or emotional distress.

TAG BUDGET

- M GOAL : Using TAG funds to achieve appropriate identification and rate and level instruction for all TAG children.
- M 1) maintaining centralized TAG staff for the purpose of complying with the state mandate, e.g. identification, parent involvement, programs and services.
- M 2) distributing TAG budget to the schools with accountability for the appropriateness of expenditures to the regions.

DISTRICT TAG GOALS FOR 1997-1998

The District is committed to meeting the following schedule to ensure articulated, timely, and ongoing service to TAG students. A report will be submitted to the Superintendent and the Board showing the degree to which schools were able to meet the schedule listed below.

- ☐ **First week of school:** TAG files, portfolios, instructional plans, etc. located and distributed to appropriate classroom teachers to provide key information for instructional planning.
- ☐ **September mailing to TAG parents:** Copies of the letter sent to the Region and TAG offices.
- ☐ **By mid-October:** Information gathered from parents and students and from TAG files, and assessments completed. Draft of the instructional plan to parents.
- ☐ **November conferences:** Instructional plan finalized and signed by parent.
- ☐ **By end of November:** TAG parent meeting held.
- ☐ **January or February mailing to TAG parents:** Copies of the letter sent to Region and TAG offices. **This letter needs to include procedure for building's spring review of student plans for TAG programs and services.**